



THE BELTED KINGFISHER

DELAWARE-OTSEGO AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC.

Coming Activities

January

January 12 – Eagle Field Trip

January 15 – DOAS Board Meeting

January 18 – DOAS Program

January 20 – Waterfowl Count

February

February 10 – Eagle Field Trip

February 15 – DOAS Program

February 15-18 – GBBC

February 19 – DOAS Board Mtg

March

March 15 – DOAS Program

June

June 2 – Birds, brunch, beer

More information on page 7

**All DOAS programs
are free and open
to the public**

Annual Fall Montezuma Trip



Yellow-headed Blackbird, by Dave Kiehm

On Saturday, October 20, 2012, a group of fourteen participants drove the long haul to Montezuma with low to medium expectations of seeing the migrating shorebirds, waterfowl, and raptors. This year's venture proved spectacular. The list of species seen was posted on our website within a day thanks, once again, to the perfect tallying and willingness of Carol Lynch to take this task on.

Driving through the main pool areas, we were treated to a variety of shorebirds and large numbers of ducks, in particular, pintails. The viewing offered excellent scoping

and photographing opportunities. We moved further on and came upon a birder, who had been at her spot for a few hours. She reported that a Greater White-fronted Goose had been seen in that location but so far she had no luck. Our group stayed and when one of our group members spotted at least five to eight Sandhill Cranes feeding, we were thrilled. In the Spring Montezuma trip spotting a pair is the goal. Snow geese were present but we did not see the reported American Avocet.

The last stop on our trip taught the majority of the group a valuable birding lesson. *Never, ever*, glance at huge flocks of birds, flying and landing, flying and landing in a large field in a hurried manner. The group moved on with the exception of Dave Kiehm, who took photos to create one of his amazing paintings, while the rest of us went forth to another area that offered up nothing. Dave with his wife Anne had managed to view a yellow-headed blackbird and he had the photo to prove it. The group did fast U-turns, sped up the road and did not manage to spot this truly unusual find.

Just think in three months, we can look forward the Annual Spring Migration back up at Montezuma.

~ Eleanor Moriarty

*President's Message***Hemlocks, Acadian Flycatchers, and Climate Change**

Beyond the woodcock meadow on our hillside farm, a secluded stream skirts the base of a north-facing slope and enters a steep little gorge as it makes its way toward Butternut Creek. The forest flanking this stream is a nearly pure stand of hemlocks – cool, shady, healthy. This lovely hemlock grove is the haunt of conifer-loving blackburnian and black-throated green warblers; here too, we listen to the exquisite bird music of winter wrens, hermit thrushes, Louisiana water thrushes, blue-headed vireos. Most of these birds are found nowhere else on our property. So far, we have looked in vain for another hemlock-loving species – Acadian flycatcher – whose range barely reaches the southern fringes of our DOAS area. But with a warming climate, these flycatchers should soon be here too, hawking insects among our streamside hemlocks.

Unless... unless these hemlocks are gone before the Acadian flycatchers arrive! Such a disaster seems likely, because a devastating insect pest – the hemlock woolly adelgid – also is extending its range northward into our region. Native to Japan but accidentally introduced to Virginia in 1954, this aphid-like scale insect has since spread death and destruction into native hemlock forests from coastal Maine to Georgia. Until now, though, the adelgid has spared the upland regions of northern New York, apparently unable to survive the harsher winters north of the Catskills and – farther west – Pennsylvania's Appalachian Plateau. But now the adelgid sits on our very doorstep, apparently having made an end run around the Catskills to invade Schoharie County from the Hudson Valley. Sound the alarm! Although that may do little good, since control measures so far have failed miserably in the more southerly regions where the adelgid has become established. The individual hemlock you may have in your yard may be saved through repeated insecticide applications, but forest populations of hemlock have seldom withstood the adelgids' onslaught.

In southern Pennsylvania, where my wife and I formerly lived, hemlocks flourished in the small, cool valleys cutting through the River Hills of Lancaster and York Counties to feed clear water into the mighty Susquehanna. Each hemlock valley was separated from its neighbors by upland oak-hickory forests, and since the reproductive stage of the adelgid life cycle is sedentary, we hoped the insects would have difficulty spreading from one valley to the next. No such luck! During the 1990's all the valleys were infested, and nearly all the hemlocks died. Apparently birds and wind were fully capable of spreading eggs embedded in the sticky white "wool" that is secreted by the insects as they feed on the host trees' sap.

Having witnessed the assault of the adelgid in Pennsylvania, my wife and I feel especially privileged to now live next door to a healthy Otsego County hemlock stand. But for how much longer? Ecologists have described upstate New York's forests as a coniferous/deciduous mosaic – the Hemlock/White Pine/Northern Hardwoods regional forest type. Soon we may have to shorten the name, dropping "hemlock". So when spring comes, I urge you all to get out and enjoy the hemlocks - and their special birds - while we still have them! I hope, at least for another year, that none of us will find frothy white wool on the hemlock needles we examine. Perhaps we should even be hoping for colder winters again! If that can save our hemlocks, I'll gladly cut more firewood and forego the Acadian flycatchers.

~ Joe Richardson

THE DELAWARE - OTSEGO**AUDUBON SOCIETY**

FOUNDED 1968

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ADDRESS CORRESPONDENCE TO:

Delaware Otsego Audubon Society
P.O. Box 544
Oneonta, NY 13820

Email: info@doas.us

ON THE WEB:

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The Belted Kingfisher, email:

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Conservation and Legislation

Wildlife threats overseas—We often focus on our immediate surroundings when it comes to environmental and wildlife issues, and indeed that is where we can be most effective. However, there is no doubt that even more pressing problems occur around the globe, including decimation of iconic animals to the point of near extinction.

Recently, both tigers and elephants have been in the news. The global population of tigers in the wild may now be as low as 3200 animals—a loss of 97% over the past century. The decline is attributed to poaching, retaliatory killings and habitat loss, and continues despite efforts to establish preserves in the Asian nations where the species still holds on.

For example, this fall, an 180,000 acre corridor was created in eastern Russia to allow Amur tigers access between Russia's Sikhote-Alin mountains and the Wandashan mountains in China. However, ongoing illegal logging in this region, and rapid human population growth in northeast China pressure the small numbers of remaining tigers.

For African elephants, the ivory trade is the greatest threat. Although bans on the sale of ivory in past years had reduced killing of elephants for their tusks, there has been a resurgence of this illegal activity. In October, a major ivory seizure in Hong Kong uncovered roughly four tons of ivory products—estimated to be valued at over \$3.4 million and potentially equivalent to 500 elephants.

Asian elephants are continually squeezed by expanding human populations and loss of habitat, forcing the animals into small preserves, and isolating populations with loss of genetic diversity. Capture of wild elephants for use in logging and the tourist trade also takes a toll on elephants.

Elephant numbers were estimated to have declined by 80% prior to the ban on ivory sale in 1990, and there had been promising recovery since them. However, increasing poaching and loss of habitat has again brought the species to near endangered species status.

On November 8, the US State Department held an unprecedented event on illegal wildlife trafficking and conservation. In her remarks, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called for an end to illicit wildlife trafficking, which she emphasized as a major foreign policy and security issue. The gathering brought together foreign ambassadors, including from Kenya and Indonesia, and leaders from international organizations, non-governmental conservation organizations and the private sector.

Having the US government turn the spotlight on the plight of tigers and elephants and the continuing threat of illegal wildlife trafficking is a positive step in bringing these issues to the public's attention.

What you can do—Thank outgoing Secretary Clinton for her initiative in publicizing the plight of international wildlife (US Department of State, 2201 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20520; www.contact-us.state.gov/app/ask). Send a copy of your letter to President Obama and urge him to appoint a replacement who will continue this focus. Ask him to enact strong US government policies to prevent the illegal killing and trafficking of wildlife. Copies to your federal lawmakers will also increase the effectiveness of your message. Also, get the facts on sources when considering purchase of any wildlife or plant item, and consider supporting those organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund (www.worldwildlife.org) and TRAFFIC (www.traffic.org) that are working to protect these threatened creatures.

~ *Andy Mason*

Ollie Otter

I was delighted a few weeks ago to see an otter in one of my ponds the first sighting of an otter here in twenty six years. I watched as he foraged for and got several frogs and minnows always emerging with his eyes on me as he ate. I had no camera, only binoculars and when I tried to edge closer he made a bee line for the inflow stream and was gone. Today I spotted him in another pond and with camera in hand was able to get some shots, not that he was oblivious to my presence in fact just the opposite, he was always focused directly on me unless underwater. Ironically my son had mentioned that we have too many sunfish in this pond and suddenly now we have a natural control agent.

Jack McShane, Andes, NY



DOAS Christmas Bird Count Summary – 1969-2012 – 44 Years, 107 Species

Compiled by J. Robert Miller

Species	2012	# years	high # of birds (year)
Snow Goose	240	3	1169 (11)
Common Loon		2	1 (73, 79)
Double-crested Corm.		1	1 (06)
Tundra Swan		1	1 (99)
Great Blue Heron		20	4 (91)
Canada Goose	1401	25	2681 (11)
Green-winged Teal		1	1 (82)
American Black Duck	4	28	44 (95)
Mallard	131	34	238 (07)
Canvasback		2	13 (01)
Ring-necked Duck		1	12 (99)
Bufflehead		2	3 (88)
Common Merganser	100	23	100 (12)
Hooded Merganser	97	5	97 (12)
Osprey		2	1 (93, 00)
Golden Eagle		3	2 (04)
Bald Eagle	3	8	3 (09, 11, 12)
Northern Harrier		9	1 (73, 80, 83, 94, 98, 00, 07, 09, 10)
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	20	2 (81, 90, 98, 05, 08)
Cooper's Hawk	2	18	5 (09)
Northern Goshawk	1	13	2 (87)
Red-shouldered Hawk		4	1 (74, 99, 03, 04)
Red-tailed Hawk	26	44	46 (09)
Rough-legged Hawk	1	37	10 (74)
American Kestrel	3	32	10 (73)
Merlin		1	1 (00)
Ring-necked Pheasant		18	3 (71, 84, 86, 00)
Ruffed Grouse	4	34	24 (82)
American Coot		1	1 (09)
Wild Turkey	25	32	1225 (95)
Northern Bobwhite		2	5 (75)
Killdeer		2	1 (79, 85)
Ring-billed Gull	122	22	206 (01)
Herring Gull	1	4	9 (92)
Rock Pigeon	457	37	1517 (98)
Mourning Dove	219	42	409 (98)
Common Barn-Owl		1	1 (71)
Eastern Screech-Owl	11	13	11 (12)
Long-eared Owl	1	1	1 (12)
Great Horned Owl	5	31	5 (04, 07, 12)
Barred Owl	3	12	3 (12)
N. Saw-whet Owl	1	4	2 (04, 07)
Short-eared Owl		1	1 (08)
Belted Kingfisher	3	28	5 (99)
Red-headed Woodpecker		3	1 (80, 82, 99)
Red-bellied Woodpecker	6	9	6 (12)
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	6	3 (93, 97)
Downy Woodpecker	58	44	85 (08)
Hairy Woodpecker	33	44	59 (71)
Northern Flicker		12	2 (69, 00, 03, 05, 06, 09)
Pileated Woodpecker		27	9 (08)
Horned Lark		6	25 (72)
Blue Jay	182	44	500 (72)

Species	2012	# years	high # of birds (year)
American Crow	562	44	1040 (08)
Common Raven	17	9	31 (07)
Black-capped Chickadee	707	44	799 (07)
Boreal Chickadee		1	3 (75)
Tufted Titmouse	28	36	93 (09)
Red-breasted Nuthatch	26	44	40 (93)
White-breasted Nuthatch	84	44	91 (07)
Brown Creeper	5	35	9 (99)
Winter Wren	1	1	1 (12)
Carolina Wren	3	17	4 (06)
Golden-crowned Kinglet	6	26	20 (82)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet		2	4 (99)
Eastern Bluebird	4	5	35 (07)
Swainson's Thrush		1	1 (71)
Hermit Thrush		1	1 (07)
Wood Thrush		1	1 (71)
Varied Thrush		2	1 (71, 83)
American Robin	1	17	16 (07)
Gray Catbird		2	1 (72, 07)
Northern Mockingbird		8	2 (81)
Cedar Waxwing	15	25	42 (07)
Northern Shrike		21	5 (95)
European Starling	1143	43	2741 (00)
Yellow-rumped Warbler		1	1 (75)
Northern Cardinal	28	43	76 (76)
Rose-breasted Grosbeak		1	6 (79)
Eastern Towhee		3	2 (80)
American Tree Sparrow	7	44	269 (71)
Chipping Sparrow		1	8 (83)
Field Sparrow		1	2 (77)
Savannah Sparrow		1	1 (71)
Fox Sparrow		1	1 (97)
Song Sparrow	2	32	41 (75)
Swamp Sparrow		1	6 (75)
White-throated Sparrow	2	26	39 (72)
White-crowned Sparrow		6	3 (69)
Dark-eyed Junco	119	44	1051 (71)
Snow Bunting		18	500 (76)
Red-winged Blackbird		14	150 (11)
Rusty Blackbird		1	2 (74)
Common Grackle		9	65 (71)
Brown-headed Cowbird		23	200 (84)
Bullock's Oriole		1	1 (70)
Baltimore Oriole		1	1 (11)
Pine Grosbeak		15	80 (72)
Purple Finch	11	36	102 (82)
House Finch	79	37	452 (86)
Red Crossbill		5	20 (86)
White-winged Crossbill		2	3 (85)
Common Redpoll	42	26	101 (99)
Pine Siskin	11	25	149 (08)
American Goldfinch	98	44	418 (08)
Evening Grosbeak		32	696 (86)
House Sparrow	91	44	947 (74)

44th Christmas Bird Count

On December 15th, 9 field teams of 23 people and 5 feeder watchers in 24 hours saw 6222 birds of 55 species. It was a fine day with ponds partially frozen and flowing water open. Bob Donnelly's team started searching for owls at 3 AM and birded until 2 PM. They saw 2 birds new to our CBC: 1 Winter Wren and 1 Long-eared Owl. Wintering birds from the north were 1 Rough-legged Hawk, 7 American Tree Sparrows, 42 Common Redpolls and 11 Pine Siskins.

Late lingerers were 1 Great Blue Heron, 4 Eastern Bluebirds, 1 American Robin, 15 Cedar Waxwings, 2 Song Sparrows, and 2 White-throated Sparrows. The total list with numbers and a summary of all our counts 1969-2012 is on page 4. *Bob Miller*



Winter Wren, by Dave Kiehm

Woolly Bear Caterpillars

Each October, we all start finding Woolly Bears any time one goes for a walk. I never remember from year to year how to use these weather prescient beings to predict the winter. So a little research seemed to be called for.

They are the pupal stage of the Isabella Tiger Moth, a yellow moth which dies shortly after it lays eggs. The eggs are deposited on trees, grasses, and flowering plants. In our climate, there are generally three generations in any given year. It is only the final generation we see in the fall, when the caterpillars are looking for a place to spend the winter. They will usually hide under a rock or log, and produce antifreeze, which allows them to recover

in the spring after being totally frozen. With warmer weather, they quickly resume feeding, then form their cocoon. (There is an Arctic Woolly Bear which can take up to 14 years for one generation.)

In folklore, the longer the black bands are, the harder the winter will be. Unfortunately, it seems the black bands are a better predictor of how hard the last winter was not. Older and better fed caterpillars have significantly more black banding.

Not to be discouraged by facts, I have done an exhaustive survey over the years of the local fauna, and, without hesitation, I am predicting for this winter a return of continental glaciers.

~ Bob Donnelly

Hawk Watch News

The total raptor count for the fall 2012 season at the Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch was just below 5000 as of early December. This milestone should be reached by season's end on New Years Day, topping last year's count of 4609, but likely below the 11 year average of 5362.

Golden Eagle numbers stand at 141, also below the average of 179, despite good counts of 21 on Nov. 4, 30 on Nov. 5, and 20 on Nov. 13. Double-digit Golden counts are still possible in December though.

Counters were frustrated by poor visibility from lake-effect snow on the days with good northwest winds. These conditions no doubt resulted in missed birds.

Among other species, Sharp-shinned Hawk numbers were very good, with 637 representing the third highest total in the 24 year history of the count. Red-tailed Hawks stood at 1587, a modest rebound from 2011's low count of 1384.

Counting will continue through December on days with promising conditions. Visitors are always welcome at the hawkwatch. The best flights are on north or northwest winds,

often the day or two following passage of a cold front.

For more information, or to check on coverage, contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net, or Tom Salo, (607) 965-8232, salothomas@gmail.com.

More information and directions to the hawkwatch at the DOAS Sanctuary can be found at www.franklinmt.org.



Migrating Osprey, by Dave Kiehm

January Program

Have Bones Will Travel

On Friday January 18, 2013, the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society program *Have Bones will Travel* will be presented by Sy Lloyd. He is well known around the counties for his incredible educational exhibits of the wildlife skeletons that he is licensed by both the State and Federal agencies to obtain. He has a unique technique for preserving the bones of a diverse and extensive collection. The displays are fascinating and will offer a terrific evening of entertainment

This program begins at 7:30PM at the Elm Park United Methodist Church on Chestnut Street, Oneonta. Free and open to the public, and refreshments are served. For further information contact; Eleanor Moriarty @ (607) 435-2054

Sy Lloyd with display of wildlife skeletons, at right



Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)
16th Annual Count



*Evening Grosbeak
by Dave Kiehm*

The 2013 GBBC will take place February 15– 18.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is an annual 4-day event that engages bird watchers of all ages in counting birds to create a real-time snapshot of where the birds are.

Everyone is welcome—from beginning bird watchers to experts. It takes as little as 15 minutes on one day, or you can count for as long as you like each day of the event. It’s free, fun, and easy—and it helps the birds.

Participants tally the number of individual birds of each species they see during their count period. They enter these numbers on the GBBC website. See birdcount.org for details.

OCCA Launches “What’s In Our Water?”

Groundwater is one of our most valuable resources. Half of America drinks groundwater every day. More than 17 million households in the United States use individual wells to supply water for their families. Wells are used to extract groundwater from aquifers.

Heavy industrial activity, including high volume hydraulic fracturing—or hydrofracking—for natural gas, may put our groundwater at risk. Most homeowners do not know the quality of their well water and, as such, would not be able to prove water contamination if it were to occur.

With this in mind, the Otsego County Conservation Association is launching a groundwater testing program – “What’s In Our Water” – that will provide certified baseline testing of private drinking water wells in pre-targeted areas countywide. These data will provide:

1. a baseline for, and fingerprinting of, well water chemistry by which changes to the wells will be detectable, and

2. a better understanding of groundwater flow systems and subsequent mapping of aquifers.

Water sampling and analysis will be conducted by NY State Department of Health Environmental Laboratory Approval Program-certified laboratory staff, after the appropriate test sites have been identified by hydrology professionals using previously collected water quality data. This battery of third-party testing will identify the baseline concentrations of signature chemicals typically associated with hydrofracking or other heavy industrial activity which may or may not already be present in the groundwater.

For a complete description of OCCA’s groundwater monitoring program, including information on baseline well water testing, visit the OCCA website, www.occainfo.org.

Otsego County property owners who have already had wells tested are invited to share their results with OCCA, to be pooled with other data collected through this program.

~ Andy Mason

Upcoming Activities

January

January 12 – Eagle Field Trip: Visit rivers and reservoirs in Delaware County where birds concentrate to feed. Recent trips have turned up 20+ eagles. Other raptors and waterfowl are usually sighted on this trip.

Meet at Dietz St. parking lot across from the YMCA at 7:30 AM; participants can be picked up en route in Delhi and Walton. We will stop at a local restaurant for lunch for interested participants. Return to Oneonta mid- to late afternoon. Contact Andy Mason (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net for details.

January 15 – DOAS Board Meeting: 7 PM at the home of Charlie Scheim

January 18 – DOAS Program: *Have Bones Will Travel*, presented by Sy Lloyd. The program will begin at 7:30 PM at the Elm Park United Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut Street, Oneonta. Refreshments will be served. For more information contact Program Chairman Eleanor Moriarty at (607) 435-2054.

January 20 – NYSOA Waterfowl Count: The NY State Ornithological Association’s annual statewide waterfowl count. DOAS covers Otsego Lake and the Susquehanna River above Unadilla, the Unadilla River, and Cannonsville Reservoir and the W. Branch of the Delaware River. This effort involves surveying waterways where they can be seen, and identifying and counting ducks and geese. The totals are used by the Dept. of Environmental Conservation in managing these species over the upcoming year.

Anyone interested in helping with this census, please contact Andy Mason, (607) 652-2162, AndyMason@earthling.net.

February

February 10 – Eagle Field Trip: A second eagle field trip—details and location are to be determined. For information, contact Bob Donnelly (607) 652-2162, rsdonn@yahoo.com.

February 15 – DOAS Program: *Grass Pellets* by EnviroEnergyNY. The Miller family from Unadilla NY will present their grass pellet manufacturing success, an alternative and sustainable form of energy. The program will begin at 7:30 PM at the Elm Park United Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut Street, Oneonta. Refreshments will be served. For more information contact Eleanor Moriarty at (607) 435-2054.

February 15-18 – Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC): For information see: birdcount.org.

February 19 – DOAS Board Meeting: 7 PM at the Elm Park United Methodist Church, Oneonta.

March

March 15 – DOAS Program: *What’s Been Eating at Our Golden Eagle Feeders?* by Tom Salo. The program will begin at 7:30 PM at the Elm Park United Methodist Church, 401 Chestnut Street, Oneonta. Refreshments will be served. For more information contact Eleanor Moriarty at (607) 435-2054.

Save the Date

June 2 – Birds, Brunch and Beer at the Ommegang Brewery. Birds, walks, great food, great auctions of local art work. Details will follow in upcoming issues.

June						
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30						
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DOAS Membership Application

Membership in the Delaware-Otsego Audubon Society includes 9 issues of our newsletter, *The Belted Kingfisher*. Cost is \$15 annually or \$25 for two years. Please make your check payable to “DOAS” and mail payment with this form to: DOAS Membership Chair, PO Box 544, Oneonta, NY 13820-0544.

Note: Please mail National Audubon renewals to address on renewal notice.

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October–November Bird Sightings

Tomorrow is the first day of winter. Some birds were still hanging around well into November like the Red-bellied Woodpecker and the Red-headed Woodpecker. Not to be outdone by those birds that usually migrate in a timely fashion Pine Siskins, Common Redpolls, and Pine and Evening Grosbeaks made their appearance after not having been seen regularly in past years.

On Oct. 19th Bob Donnelly had stopped 6 times to shoo away American Woodcocks walking along his driveway in Cooperstown. Even the headlights of the car didn't seem to bother them. That same day Sandy Bright had 4 Pine Siskins at her feeder in Oneonta with more of them flitting in the nearby trees and Jeffrey Murray reported seeing 2 White-crowned and 2 White-throated Sparrows in Fly Creek. The next day John Davis had his first fall Fox Sparrow in Cooperstown. On the 22nd Becky Gretton saw Evening Grosbeaks in Richfield Springs and Jeff Murray watched 6 very shy Evening Grosbeaks in Fly Creek

on the 23rd. Also on the 23rd Gerianne Carillo was greeted by the zzzzrrreeeee song of a Pine Siskin in Milford. Two more Evening Grosbeaks appeared in Oneonta on 10/24 to the delight of Betty and Nancy New. On 10/26 Tom Salo had 40-50 Pine Siskins visiting his feeders in W. Burlington as a Cooper's and a Sharp-shinned Hawk hungrily waited to pounce. Tom also saw about 70 Brant fly over W. Burlington late in the afternoon heading south on 10/31. Stan Salthe saw an Evening Grosbeak waif from Hurricane Sandy appear in Deposit at the end of October.

On 11/1 Andy Mason had 4 Evening Grosbeaks at his feeder in Jefferson. On the 3rd Eleanor Moriarity saw 5 Evening Grosbeaks in Davenport, topping Andy's number and Kay Crane had a Red-bellied Woodpecker show up with a Red-winged Blackbird at her Walton feeder. The next day as Gerianne Carillo was filling her feeders an American Tree Sparrow lurked in the bushes scolding her all the while waiting for her to disappear to get a much needed snack. A Common Redpoll greeted Randy and Carol Lynch in their



White-crowned Sparrow
by Dave Kiehm

yard in Jefferson on 11/10. On the 12th Ted Buhl saw 30+ Hooded Mergansers and 20 Common Mergansers in Richfield Springs. On 11/19-11/20 Marilyn Huneke saw 200-300 European Starlings eating something that must have hatched on her Delhi lawn. What a sight! Also on the 20th a Red-bellied Woodpecker visited Stacey Grocott in Burlington. On 11/25 in snow flurries 2 Red-winged Blackbirds huddled under Kay Crane's feeder in Walton. On the 27th a Red-bellied Woodpecker appeared at Dorain Huneke's feeder in Treadwell. At the end of November Ted Buhl was rueing the fact that his beaver pond in Richfield Springs had frozen overnight and that it would be four long months before he would see some treasured water fowl. As he was typing this email to me he spotted 15 Wild Turkeys feeding on spilled corn. The birds have a way of never disappointing us.

If you have bird sightings to report, contact me at dbenko@frontiernet.net, or 6815 Co. Hwy 16, Delhi, NY 13753, or at 607-829-5218 for the next issue of *The Belted Kingfisher*.

Dianne Benko